

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-10

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O R 051320Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6961

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUTY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 3479

E.O.11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IS, EG, US

SUBJECT: ISRAELI PARLIAMENTARIANS ON ARAB-ISRAELI
NEGOTIATING ISSUES

SUMMARY: WHILE KNESSET PLENUM JUNE 4 DISCUSSED GOI
DECISION RE REDUCTION OF FORCES IN CANAL AREA
(TEL AVIV 3449), ISRAELI PARLIAMENTARIANS IN CORRIDOR
CONVERSATIONS WERE CONCERNED PRIMARILY WITH UPCOMING
FORD-RABIN MEETING. TONE OF CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM RE
PROSPECTS FOR INTERIM ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN AGREEMENT WAS
BALANCED BY CONCERN THAT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE
COMPLICATED BY GOI DEMAND FOR LINKAGE TO NEW ROUND
OF SYRIAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS. GOI POSITION ON
PASSAGE OF ISRAELI CARGO THROUGH SUEZ CANAL WAS
WIDELY VIEWED AS IMPORTANT LITMUS TEST OF PROSPECTS
FOR ATTAINING GOI-EGYPTIAN AGREEMENT. END SUMMARY.

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1. IN WEEK BETWEEN SALZBURG AND UPCOMING GOI CABINET

MEETING ON EVE OF RABIN'S DEPARTRE FOR WASHINGTON, ISRAELI PARLIAMENTARIANS WERE PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH ASSESSIN PROSPECTS FOR NEW INTERM ISRAELI-EGYPTAIN AGREEMENT. DEPARTMENT MAY BE INTERESTED IN FOLLOWING SUMMARY OF CORRIDOR CONVERSATIONS HELD BY EMBASSY OFFICER WITH WIDE RANGE OF MK'S IN COURSE OF JUNE 4 KNESSET SESSION.

2. PROSPECTS FOR INTERIM GOE-GOI AGREEMENT.

PARLIAMENTARISN GENERALLY BELIEVED THAT PROSPECTS FOR ACHIEVING INTRIM AGREEMENT HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED IN LAST TWO MONTHS. CONSENSUS WAS THAT OPENING OF SUEZ CANAL AND POSITIVE EGYPTAIN RESPONSE TO GOI'S UNILATERAL GESTURE HAD CONTRIBUTED TO IMPROVEMENT OF ATMOSPHERE. AS ONE LABOR PARTY MK PUT IT, EGYPT AND ISREL COULD GO FURTHER TOWARDS MEETING EACH OTHER'S REQUIREMENTS THAN THEY HAD BEEN ABLE TO DO IN MARCH. EGYPT NOW REALIZED THAT IT HAD TO GIVE ISRAEL SOME MORE SUBSTANTITIVE QUID PRO QUO FOR WITHDRAWALS. GOI HAD SHOWN THAT IT COULD STAND UP TO U.S. AND EGYPT, AND HENCE RABIN NOW COULDAFFORD TO BE MORE FORTHCOMING. MOST MK'S BELIEVED THAT KEY ISSUES NOW WERE(A) DURATION; (B) ARRANGEMENTS ON THE GROUND AND(C) SOME OTHER SYMBOLIC GESTURES. THEY BELIEVD GOI WOULD DROP ITS DEMAND FOR NON-BELLIGERENCY DECLARATION.(NOTE: THIS ANALYSIS CLOSELY MIRRORS THAT OF JERUSALEM POST'S DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT DAVID LANDAU JUNE 5). LEFT WING OPPOSITION MK PUT MATTER MORE BLUNTLY BY COMMENTING THAT U.S." CARROT AND STICK" APPROACH WAS WORKING, WITH ISRAEL LOOKIN FORWARD TO PROSPECT OF RECEIVIN ECONOMIC AID AND F 15'S IF RENEWED NEGOTIATIONS LEAD TO INTERIM AGREEMENT.

3. PASSAGE OF ISRAELI CARGOES. BOTH IN PLENUM AND IN CORRIDORS, PARLIAMENTARINAS EMPHASIZED IMPORTACE OF EGYPTAIN POSITION ON PASSAGE OF ISRAELI CARGOES THROUGH SUEZ CANAL AS LITMUS TEST FOR PROSPECTS OF ATTAINING INTERIM AGREEMENT. AS MILITRY CORRESPONDENT FOR PRESTIGIOUS ISRAELI PAPER EXPRESSED IT, GOE DECISION TO ALLOW ANY ISRAEI CARGO AT ALL THROUGH CANAL WOULD CONFIDENTIAL

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"PUT BALL BACK IN ISRAELI COURT" AND CREATE MOMENTUM IN ISRAEL FOR MOVING AHEADTOWARD INTERIM AGREEMENT; EXPLICITLY NEGATIVE EGYPTAIN DECISION WOULD HAVE RESERVE EFFECT.

4. LINKAGE WITH SYRIAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS. SEVRAL PARLIAMENTARIANS CALLED OUR ATTENTION TO COMMENT BY DFEENSE MINISTER PERES, AT LABOR ALIGNMENT KNESSET

FACTION MEETING JUNE 3, THAT ISREL MUST CLARIFY NOW WITH USG WHETHER GOE-GOI INTERIM AGREEMENT WOULD STAND ON ITS OWN, OR WHETHER IT WOULD BE CONDITIONED BY PRESSURE ON ISRAEL TO BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS WITH SYRIA IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER. THESE OBSERVERS SAW SYRIAN LINKAGE ISSUE AS POTENTIALLY COMPLICATING FACTOR IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPT.

5. DOMESTIC POLITICAL PRESSURES. PARLIAMENTARIANS ALSO NOTED THAT LABOR PARTY'S JUNIOR COALITION PARTNER, MAPMA, WAS BECOMING INCREASINGLY RESTLESS WITH GOI'S FAILURE SO FAR TO DEFINE ITS OVERALL NEGOTIATING OBJECTIVES. (NOTE: MAPAM POLITICAL COMMITTEE JUNE 4 ADOPTED RESOLUTION URGING RABIN TO " TAKE THE INITIATIVE BY PRODUCING A PLAN FOR A PEACE SETTLEMENT ".) WHILE ON SURFACE LABOR ALIGNMENT REMAINED STABLE, ONE MK TOLD US, THERE WAS SOME DANGER THAT IN ABSENCE OF SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS ON NEGOTIATING FRONT IN MONTHS AHEAD IT COULD COME APART. PROPONENTS WITHIN MAPAM OF SPLITTING-UP LABOR ALIGNMENT HAD BEEN STRENGTHENED BY RECENT FORMATION OF LEFT-OF-CENTER PARTY YAAD(TEL AVIV 2790), WHICH HAD CREATED POTENTIAL FOR BUILDING NEW ENLARGED " DOVISH" POLITICAL FORCE. AWARENESS OF THIS POSSIBILITY WAS AT LEAST ONE OF THE CONSIDERATIONS WHICH RABIN WOULD HAVE TO BEAR IN MIND IN WEEKS AHEAD.

6. SHARON APPOINTMENT. MANY PARLIAMENTARIANS, PARTICULARLY FROM THE MODERATE-DOVISH SPECTRUM, EXPRESSED THEIR DISSATISFACTION AND EVEN DISMAY AT APPOINTMENT OF ARIEL SHARON AS GOI MILITARY ADVISOR(SEPTEL) THERE WERE DIFFERING VIEWS AS TO HOW THIS APPOINTMENT WOULD AFFECT GOI DECISION-MAKING PROCESS IN UPCOMING NEGOTIATIONS, PARTICULARLY

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GIVE SHARON'S WELL KNOWN OBJECTION TO ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM PASSES AND OIL FIELDS IN ABSENCE OF FINAL SETTLEMENT WITH EGYPT. SOME THOUGHT SHARON MIGHT BE FORCED INTO EARLY RESIGNATION IF RABIN WERE TO AGREE TO THESE WITHDRAWALS, BUT OTHERS BELIEVED SHARON APPOINTMENT HAD POTENTIAL OF STIFFENING GOI NEGOTIATING STANCE.

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